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DS/IP/EUR, DS/IP/ITA, AMMAN FOR RMO

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TAGS: ASEC AMED CY

SUBJECT: EMBASSY NICOSIA EAC - 19 JANUARY 2006 - AVIAN FLU
UPDATE

REF: E-MAIL DS/IP/EUR 09 JANUARY 2006

Classified By: DCM Jane Zimmerman: Reason 1.4 (C,D)

¶1. (S/NF) As instructed in reftel, the DCM convened Embassy Nicosia's EAC on January 19, 2006 to brief the Ambassador and review the Embassy's and Cypriot progress in managing a potential outbreak of the Avian Flu (AI). Also discussed were actions the Embassy will take should problems arise with American citizens who come to the Embassy seeking assistance.

Developments concerning Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot preparations will be described in greater detail septel. The meeting was attended by AMB, DCM, RSO, DAO, PAS, CONS, MGT, POL, ECON, OSC (formally FBIS), USAID, DEA and SIMO.

¶2. (SBU) Members of the EAC commented that both the Turkish Cypriots and the GOC are jointly taking steps in addressing a potential out break of AI on the island, although cooperation is still limited. Veterinarians from both sides of the Green Line have been meeting informally and will continue to conduct meetings focused on preventing AI. Cooperation like this is not/not the norm on the island.

¶3. (SBU) Consular section released a Warden Message last month relaying basic facts about AI and related web-sites where individuals can go for additional updates and information regarding AI. Specifically stated in the Warden Message is the American Embassy will not/not be distributing Tamiflu or any other vaccines or medicine.

¶4. (SBU) Consular section will send out another Warden Message that could be released as early as next week with updated information. Post is working to schedule a visit from the RMO in Jordan to coincide with the release of a second Warden Message and a meeting of Wardens on the island.

This meeting will take place at the Embassy and strives to answer questions and discuss concerns.

¶5. (SBU) The above measures should diminish the need for American citizens to visit the Embassy for further assistance or information concerning AI. Of the approximate 3500 Americans registered with the consular section, most are Cypriot-American and fully integrated into Cypriot society. The possibility of an American citizen coming to the Embassy and causing any disturbance as a result of an outbreak is minimal.

¶6. (S/NF) The EAC agreed that should unarmed, belligerent individuals gain access to the compound, the local guard force will use standard control techniques in restraining combative persons. They are trained and are capable of handling this type of situation. If a larger crowd or armed individuals gain access to the compound, several actions can be taken. The RSO Office has an excellent relationship with

the local police department, specifically with members of MMAD, the GOC's special anti-terrorism police unit. This unit is an integral part of the Embassy's perimeter security.

Their responses to all requests from the Embassy have always been prompt and they have the training and capability to disperse large crowds.

17. (S/NF) In an escalating situation, the use of the force continuum will be adhered to in restoration of order and to discontinue disturbances involving any crowd with hostile intent.

SCHLICHER